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Second-Tier Secessionism in Europe: How Has Support for Independence in Wales, Wallonia, and Galicia Changed with Increasing Claims in Scotland, Flanders, and Catalonia?

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Abstract

This paper examines the contemporary situation of "second-tier" secessionist movements in select Western European states in comparison to other, "headline-grabbing" cases like Scotland, Flanders, and Catalonia. Specifically, this paper looks at Wales in the United Kingdom in comparison to increased secessionist demands in Scotland, Wallonia in Belgium in comparison to Flanders, as well as Galicia in Spain in comparison to Catalonia (and the Basque Country). In particular, the central question is: has support for independence increased in Wales, Wallonia, and Galicia in light of events elsewhere in their respective states? In order to answer this question, variables such as 1) the existence and organization of pro-independence political parties, 2) grassroots organizations, and 3) electoral success, are used as a means of comparison between cases. Preliminary conclusions show divergence across the three cases. None of the cases, though, are yet poised to overtly challenge the integrity of their respective states.

Introduction

This paper examines the contemporary situation of "second-tier" secessionist movements in select Western European states in comparison to other, "headline-grabbing" cases like Scotland, Flanders, and Catalonia. The term "second tier" is not meant in a pejorative sense, rather, the term implies that larger secessionist movements exist elsewhere within the state, and this paper investigates movements with less intensity in the same state. Specifically, this paper investigates Wales in the United Kingdom (UK) in comparison to increased secessionist demands in Scotland, Wallonia in Belgium in comparison to Flanders, as well as Galicia in Spain in comparison to Catalonia (and the Basque Country). These "second tier" secessionist movements are overshadowed, but also play a role in the wider debate surrounding the territorial integrity of the UK, Belgium, and Spain. Pro-independence movements in Wales, Wallonia, and Galicia are understudied, especially regarding their impact on the wider national narrative. Moreover, as secessionism intensifies in some areas, a popular governmental reaction is to grant more autonomy—for example, as promised by British Prime Minister, David Cameron, in the case of Scotland following the independence referendum there in September 2014. This added autonomy, in turn, impacts these "second tier" regions and can serve to either dampen or embolden separatists depending on the individual case (Bird et al. 2010).

In light of the puzzle, a central question is posed in this paper: has support for independence increased in Wales, Wallonia, and Galicia in conjunction with increasing secessionism elsewhere in their respective states? The best way to answer this question is to investigate the electoral success, as well as polling on the question of support for independence. However, both measures have their limitations. Electoral support only takes into account whether a voter cast a ballot for a particular political party, it does not measure motivations, nor provide

an absolute guarantee that the person supports independence; in fact, research shows that a significant percentage of voters who support pro-independence parties only want more autonomy (see Mitchell et. al. 2012). Depending on the way that a polling question is asked, support for independence can be skewed. Nonetheless, both electoral results and polling provide tangible percentages as to support for independence because these voters represent support for political parties that purport secession. On a pragmatic basis, this support for pro-independence parties translates into seats in regional and national legislatures, and may lead to an independence referendum, or the necessary conditions to divide a state much like the case of Czechoslovakia in the early 1990s (see Innes 2001).

The set-up of this paper is to examine how the other regions of the UK, Belgium, and Spain have reacted to increased fervency in support for independence in other regions of the country. Given the differences in size and structure, however, a perfect comparison is not possible. For example, Wales and Galicia are simply one of several subnational units in the UK and Spain; in contrast, Wallonia is the only other, major subnational unit apart from Flanders. So, in many respects, Flanders is trying to leave Wallonia; whereas, Scotland is not primarily trying to leave Wales, nor is Catalonia primarily trying to leave Galicia.

However, the differing structures of the UK, Belgium, and Spain help to show how different states in different situations are dealing with secessionism amongst mature democratic, industrialized countries. Belgium, for all intents and purposes, has two major subnational units (there is a Brussels Region and a German-speaking Community, but both would likely be encapsulated into an independent Flanders or Wallonia should Belgium be dissolved). The UK is divided into four constituent countries—England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, so Edinburgh serves as one of four subnational units. Finally, Spain has 17 autonomous

communities. Catalonia, then, is just one of 17 subnational units. There is a clear contrast in the comparison then, which might indicate the fragility of the structure of the given state should one region actually secede.

The idea of investigating "second-tier" secessionist movements is interesting for several reasons. First, it provides a glimpse of how the Welsh, Walloon, and Galician independence movements have changed in recent years. Second, it provides some evidence as to whether a secessionist movements impact other, nascent movements. Scholars are divided on this point, and have usually concluded that not enough evidence exists. Finally, it gives some indication as to the future of contestation of the UK, Belgium, and Spain. If the secessionist movements in Scotland, Flanders, and Catalonia dissipate, will secessionism remain a major concern for London, Brussels, and Madrid? Even if secessionism becomes much less palatable in Scotland, Flanders, and Catalonia, a rise in intensity in Wales, Wallonia, or Galicia would leave the UK, Belgium, and Spain in the same predicament with the existing higher intensity independence movements.

A (Very) Brief Review of the Literature

The literature on secessionism in the developed world is broad, and encompasses numerous different cases from Quebec in Canada and the Danish dependency of Greenland in the north, to Catalonia in Spain and Veneto in Italy in the south of Europe. Scholarship on cases of secessionism has a rich, recent history; scholarship has proliferated with investigations of various cases, especially in the states studied in this paper: the UK, Belgium, and Spain.

In particular, recent scholarship has focused on a wide variety of cases, some of which have updated the status of secessionism, and secessionist tactics for independence. Some

scholars have conducted in-depth research on one particular case of secessionism (see Guibernau 2004; Lecours 2007; Crameri 2014; Humes 2014); other scholars have drawn major comparisons between higher intensity secessionist movements (see Hossay 2002; Greer 2007; Lecours 2012; Kennedy 2013; Duerr 2015); while other scholars have sought to examine much lesser known cases as a point of comparison across many states in Europe (see Cartrite 2003).

The goal of this paper is to build upon these works with a specific reference to the impact of "second-tier" secessionist movements, and, in doing so, find a gap between a comparative study of cases, and an examination of all cases. In essence, the target is to view the impact of "second-tier" secessionist movements (Wales, Wallonia, and Galicia) on the "first-tier" of secessionist movements (Scotland, Flanders, and Catalonia), rather than an overall investigation of all tiers of secessionist movements (for example, Cornwall in the UK, the German-speaking community of Belgium, or Extremadura in Spain). Again, the term "tier" is meant to imply the intensity of secessionism, rather than to indicate whether one is better than another, or to denigrate any given case; the term is merely a current classification.

Wales

As one of the four constituent parts of the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland), much of Wales has been in some form of formal union with England since the Norman invasion of England in 1066. Although not part of the initial conquest, parts of Wales were conquered in the eleventh century (Davies 2000). More formal annexation of Wales started in 1277 with the Treaty of Aberconwy, and the 1283 Statute of Rhuddlan. Despite the loss of autonomy, the Welsh language, and significant parts of Welsh culture have remained prominent in the life of the province, especially in the north and west of the territory.

Acts of Union in 1536 and 1543 formalized the Welsh place within the Kingdom of England, and provided the requisite institutional capacities to ensure uniformity, whether wanted or not, within the state. The 1707 Act of Union with Scotland, Wales then formed part of the Kingdom of Great Britain; in 1800, with the Act of Union with Ireland, Wales became one of four constituent parts of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland—later, post-1921, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (for a full overview, see Bogdanor 1999).

For many centuries, Welsh participation in the UK was often overpowered given the population size of England, and the commensurate number of English seats in parliament. This power asymmetry frequently led to complaints over the structure of the state, culminating in uprisings at times, or concerted efforts to better mollify these complaints. Even as early as William Gladstone's time as prime minister in the late nineteenth century, serious discussions were frequent on the issue of Home Rule.

After an unsuccessful referendum in 1979 on whether or not Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland would be granted devolved powers, the issue resurfaced with the election of Tony Blair as Labour Prime Minister in 1997. The people of Wales very narrowly voted in favor of the referendum, which granted Cardiff greater autonomy (Bogdanor 1999). Wales was given as assembly, which, by contrast, has less power than the Scottish Parliament, but neither body has extensive, federal-style governmental powers.

In investigating Welsh secessionism, the main vehicle for pro-independence thought is through its major parliamentary advocate, Plaid Cymru (PC), which is a longstanding political party in the province. Although the party has numerous policy platforms on a range of different issues, what is important in this paper is the position of PC on the issue of Welsh independence. Although an over-simplification, most leaders and members of PC historically advocated for

greater autonomy for Wales. This has shifted in recent years, though. Many leading politicians, including party leader, Leanne Wood, now support outright independence.

Despite the significant success of the Scottish National Party (SNP) in the 2007 and 2011 Scottish parliamentary elections, as well as the 2015 British general election (the SNP is projected to, once again, win the 2016 Scottish parliamentary election with another majority if the current polling holds), the Welsh version, PC, has received much more limited electoral support. In some respects, there has been a clear increase in electoral support for the SNP (see pages 14-15). So, in line with the central question of this paper: how has an increase in Scottish secessionism impacted Welsh secessionism?

In contrast with the SNP, PC has yet to win any election in Wales. The party came in second place in the inaugural Welsh assembly election in 1999, with the same result in 2003 and 2007. In 2011, PC slipped to third place. No party has been able to defeat the Welsh Labour Party since the inauguration of the Welsh Assembly elections in 1999. In British general elections, PC has not yet won over 15 percent of the vote in any election, and reached its zenith in 2001 with 14.3 percent. And, of the 40 British House of Commons seats available in Wales, PC has, at most, won 4 seats. At European parliamentary elections, PC is marginally more successful. In 1999, the party almost won 30 percent of the vote, and 2 of the 5 MEPs for Wales. Yet, this number has steadily declined, and is so now just over 15 percent as of the 2014 European parliamentary election.

Under PC leader, Leanne Wood, who, as noted earlier, is in favor of outright independence for Wales (with a party like PC, as is the case with many other secessionist political parties, there is a split between leaders and party members that support greater autonomy to outright independence), represents a shift from some of her predecessors who

supported greater autonomy for Wales. The question is whether PC has increased voter support in line with increases for the SNP? This question will be examined using descriptive statistics in a later section.

Galicia

Located in the northwest of Spain, the region/autonomous community is in an interesting geographical position. On the one hand, the region shares much in common with Portugal, but, on the other hand, much is also shared with Catalonia and the Basque Country as historical nations, on the periphery of Spain. This positioning is represented in the political life of the autonomous community, as movements exist to a) remain with Spain, b) to separate and create an independent state, and c) to join with Portugal.

Although a full treatment of Galician history is not the purpose here, a few notes are useful. Historically, the region of Galicia was its own kingdom, which later oscillated almost pendulum-like between the Kingdoms of Castile and Leon, before forming part of Spain (Keefe et. al. 1976). This history presents part of the picture as to why Galicia retains a distinct language and culture, but geography compounds the issue given the distance from Madrid.

In the modern era, Galicia is one of seventeen autonomous communities in Spain. Scholars differ as to whether these autonomous communities provide federal governance structure in the country, or whether Madrid is the powerful center of a unitary state. Nonetheless, the parliament in Galicia's capital city, Santiago de Compostela, provides at least the basis of an autonomous decision-making body.

Moreover, under the Spanish Constitution, Galicia is recognized—along with Catalonia and the Basque Country—as a historic nation in Spain. This provides Galicia with some reserve

powers in terms of protecting the Galician language and distinct cultural heritage. Within Spain's Constitution, however, secession is forbidden. But, like any document, the Constitution is subject to amendment, and, in the event of Catalan and/or Basque independence, secessionists in Galicia could follow their lead and declare independence.

Overall, Galicia's independence movement is less intense—and less well-known—than the movements in Catalonia and the Basque Country, but the underlying conditions have some similarities. For example, the Galician language is mutually unintelligible to Castilian Spanish, and like Basque and Catalan is viewed, at least by supporters of independence, as sufficiently different to support the cause of secession.

In Galicia, Bloque Nacionalista Galego (BNG) is the main pro-independence political party in the region. The party, founded in 1982, has a presence in the Galician parliament, Spanish parliament, and European parliament, in addition to numerous local parliaments. However, like PC in Wales, BNG has struggled to gain the support of more than 25 percent of voters, and often sits between 10 and 20 percent. Also, like PC, BNG was most successful in elections around the year 2000. The 1999 European parliamentary election marked a high point for the BNG with almost 22 percent of the vote; the 2000 Spanish parliamentary election marked a best performance for BNG with 18.5 percent, and the 1997 and 2001 Galician parliamentary elections saw BNG gain the support of 22 to 25 percent of voters.

In addition to BNG, there are numerous other, small pro-independence parties in Galicia. Within a larger coalition known as Alternativa Galega de Esquerda (AGE), ANOVA-Irmandade Nacionalista (ANOVA) is a political party that supports independence for Galicia, whilst maintaining a balance with other parties that do not support the same end goal. AGE came in third place in the 2012 Galician parliamentary election, one place ahead of BNG.

New parties like Compromiso por Galicia (CxG), for example, as often described as "soft" nationalists in that they want much greater autonomy for Galicia within the framework of a fully federal and multinational Spain. Of course, within CxG there are a range of positions on the issue, but the party is not fully committed to independence in the same manner as BNG. CxG first contested the Galician parliamentary elections in 2012, and won only 1 percent of the vote.

Voter support for pro-independence Galician political parties is examined in a later section, but the case-specific corresponding initial question of the paper remains: has a rise in Catalan nationalism also synced with a rise in Galician nationalism? The evidence thus far suggests that Galician nationalism is much less intense than in other parts of Spain, but voter support for the BNG, in particular, remains.

Wallonia

Located in the southern part of Belgium, the region of Wallonia is majority Francophone, and, for much of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, served as the economic engine of Belgium. When Belgium was created in 1831, it was done, in many respects, to separate from Protestant Netherlands, which itself was granted independence in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 (see Humes 2014). Walloon self-assertiveness was part of this, as was Flemish Catholic alignment with this movement. With Belgian colonies in sub-Saharan Africa pillaging resources (specifically, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, and Rwanda), and coal and steel industries, Wallonia's economy grew in the 19th century. Wallonia declined as an economic power in the middle part of the 20th century, paradoxically, at the same time as the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), which pooled two major resources/industries in the region.

One of the main thrusts of Flemish nationalism is the use and prominence of the Dutch language in the society. In contrast, in Wallonia, the predominant and official language is French, which provides a linguistic bifurcation in Belgium. With rising Flemish economic powers, language laws were recast, which, while time consuming, provided Flanders with significant rights. Additionally, political parties like Vlaams Belang (VB), and then Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie (N-VA) have grown in size and stature to advocate for Flemish independence. These parties now regularly secure approximately 40 percent of the popular vote.

There are no major political parties in support of independence for Wallonia, but Démocrate Fédéraliste Indépendant (DéFI) supports the concept of greater language rights for French speakers, especially around Brussels. In sum, DéFI advocates greater autonomy for Francophones, which, in some regards, serves as a synonym to Walloon regionalism. But, in truth, DéFI is not a Walloon response to N-VA or VB.

Historically, Rassemblement wallon (RW) was the main political party, which advocated a platform of greater autonomy for Wallonia. The party reached its zenith in the early 1970s with 7 percent of the vote. The political party, now called, Walloon Rally, Rassemblement Wallonie France, which has the overarching goal to unify France and Wallonia (see Wickman 1985). The party usually gets less than 2 percent of the vote in Wallonia, and has failed to gain mainstream attention for its platforms. Even when the party morphed into Union for Walloon (W+) in 2010, the level of voter support did not increase. The name subsequently switched back to Walloon Rally for the most recent election.

This tepid level of support has persisted despite the growth of VB and then N-VA in Flanders. Seemingly, no commensurate reaction has been found amongst Walloon voters, who

are much more likely to support Parti Socialiste, or Mouvement Reformateur. Both parties advocate the rights of Walloons, but securely inside of the Belgian state.

An atypical component of the Walloon movement is the desire to join with France, especially in the event of Flemish independence. It is unlikely, at the present, that Wallonia would be accepted into France for a variety of reasons, most notably the likely reaction of the international community to France expanding, and the EU headquarters. Nonetheless, this is an aspect of Walloon nationalism that is more difficult to measure, especially since much of the work has been done outside of political parties.

Unlike Wales or Galicia, Wallonia has no major, pro-independence political party to counter—and inflame—secessionism elsewhere. In some ways, this absence might help to explain why Belgium remains a unified territory despite three prolonged government formation crises following the 2007, 2010, and 2014 federal elections.

As is the case with the other cases—Wales and Galicia—the central question of this paper is how has voter support for Walloon nationalism changed in light of increasing support for Flemish pro-independence parties like N-VA and VB? Voter support seems to have remained very low in Walloon areas; supporters of autonomy for Wallonia seem content to vote for other political parties that are viewed as representing their interests.

Comparative Cases

Although secessionism in Scotland, Catalonia, and Flanders has, at least at the ballot box, increased over the course of the last decade, similar movements in other regions of each respective state have mixed reactions. The six tables in the following sections provide descriptive

statistics as to when and how many people supported secessionist political parties over the course of recent election at the regional, national, and European levels.

In Wales, there has been a move towards secession on the part of PC. But, in terms of support, PC remains stagnant with support found amongst approximately 1 in 5 Welsh voters. Support for secessionism in Scotland was quite minimal until the SNP's victory in the 1945 by-election in Motherwell and Wishaw. In recent elections, the SNP has been very successful by winning the 2007 Scottish parliamentary election, and then winning a majority in the 2011 Scottish parliamentary election. In Wales, support for PC has not mirrored the rise of the SNP.

In Galicia, support for BNG is quite similar in terms of consistent support as PC. As secessionism in Catalonia has developed with the growth of Convergéncia I Unió (CiU) and Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC), support for BNG has not grown at similar levels. Now that CiU has dissolved into its two parts: Convergéncia Democratica de Catalunya (CDC) and Unió Democratica de Catalunya (UDC), the Catalan independence movement has not dissipated. Instead, CDC and ERC joined together for the 2015 Catalan regional election under the name, Junts Pel Sí (Together for Yes).

In Wallonia, by contrast, secessionism does not seem to have increased even in spite of electoral success for VB in 2004, and for N-VA in 2010 and 2014. In many regards, Walloon political leaders have not responded to the uptick in Flemish secessionism. Although support for Flemish secessionism was very minimal in the 1970s and 1980s, it grew with VB in the 1990s and 2000s. When VB captured 24 percent of the vote in 2004, the trajectory of Flemish independence increased. Then, when N-VA decoupled the party from CD&V in 2009, the party also more formally adopted support for independence rather than greater autonomy. The policy

position of N-VA is still a little nebulous, which reflects divisions in the party. The end goal is for both Flanders and Europe to gain more powers whilst leaving the Belgian state a mere shell.

Increasing support?

In the introduction to this paper, the following question was posed: How has support for independence in Wales, Wallonia, and Galicia changed with increasing claims in Scotland, Flanders, and Catalonia? Each section of the paper, more pointedly, recast the question based on the case being discussed. This section seeks to provide answers to these questions. Showing evidence of increased support, or not, is interesting in that it provides a sense of how one region of the UK, Belgium, and Spain has impacted another.

In the following tables, this paper investigates the electoral success of pro-independence political parties in recent regional, national, and European levels over the course of the last decade or more where relevant. Of course, voter support is only one metric to measure support for independence. However, the vehicle of the secessionist political party is, most likely, the mechanism through which de jure independence might actually be achieved (Duerr 2015).

Table 1: Level of voter support for the SNP, 1999-2015

Election/Year	SNP	Change
1999 Scottish parliamentary election	28.7%	-
2001 British general election	20.1%	↓8.6%
2003 Scottish parliamentary election	23.8%	↑3.7%

2004 European election	19.7%	↓4.1%
2005 British general election	17.7%	↓2.0%
2007 Scottish parliamentary election	32.9%	↑15.2%
2009 European election	29.1%	↓3.8%
2010 British general election	19.9%	↓9.2%
2011 Scottish parliamentary election	45.4%	↑25.5%
2014 European election	29.0%	↓16.4%
2015 British general election	50.0%	↑21.0%

Even though clear vicissitudes exist as to the extent of voter support for the SNP, the clear delineation is that the SNP has won more votes over time. The SNP developed into a major contender in Scottish politics with the creation of the Scottish Parliament in 1999. However, the party did not actually win an election until 2007 when the SNP governed with a minority in parliament. In 2011, the SNP even managed to win the election with a majority, even though the structure of the Scottish Parliament makes it difficult for any one of the four major parties to prevail. This outcome provided the necessary circumstances to hold an independence referendum in 2014. (Tangentially, this is one of the main reasons why the secessionist political party is used as the central metric in this paper—because independence might occur as a result of the party, regardless of whether its voters actually support independence.)

Despite the defeat of the "yes" campaign in the 2014 referendum, with 44.7% of the plebiscite vote, the SNP managed to be successful again in the next election. Moreover, the SNP

further advanced their voter support, and gained 50 seats in the House of Commons in the 2015 British election—the SNP won a total of 56 of the 59 available seats.

Table 2: Level of voter support for VB and N-VA, 2004-2015

	VB	N-VA	Change
1999 regional election	15.5%	N/A	-
2003 Belgian election	18.2%	5.2%	↑2.7%; -
2004 European election	23.2%	With CD&V: 28.2%	↑5.0%
2004 regional election	24.2%	With CD&V: 26.1%	↑1.0%
2007 Belgian general election	19.0%	With CD&V: 29.2%	↓5.2%
2009 regional/European election	15.3%	9.9%	↓3.7%
2010 Belgian general election	12.6%	28.2%	↓2.7%; ↑19.3%
2014 combined election	5.9%	32.2%	↓6.7%; ↑3.0%

Secessionism in Flanders has grown quite rapidly with the creation of the precursor to VB in 1978—Vlaams Blok. Although support for Vlaams Blok was only 1-2 percent in the 1970s and 1980s, the party began to win a larger percentage of the vote in the early 1990s, and then expanded until the zenith of the party's vote in 2004, with almost one-quarter of the support of Flemish voters. Since then, however, support for VB has halved in almost every Belgian election. From 24% of the vote in 2004 to 12% in 2010, and finally down to approximately 6% in 2014. Support for political parties can go through cycles, but VB has faced a significant decrease in voter support, 2004-2014.

Then, in 2001, when N-VA was created out of Volksunie's collapse, the party gradually began to win votes, especially within the coalition with the Christian Democrats, CD&V. Most of this support, however, was for CD&V. And, when N-VA exited the coalition for the 2009 regional election, support for the party was only approximately 10 percent. Since then, however, N-VA has grown to be the most supported party in Belgian for both the 2010 and 2014 elections.

Table 3: Level of voter support for ERC and CDC, 1999-2015

	ERC	CDC	Change
1999 regional election	8.7%	37.7%	-
2000 Spanish election	5.6%	28.8%	↓3.1%; ↓8.9%
2003 regional election	16.4%	30.9%	↑10.8%; ↑2.1%
2004 Spanish election	15.9%	20.8%	↓0.5%; ↓10.1%
2006 regional election	14.0%	31.5%	↓1.9%; ↑10.7%
2008 Spanish election	7.8%	20.9%	↓6.2%; ↓10.6%

2010 regional election	7.0%	38.4%	↓0.8%; ↑17.5%
2011 Spanish election	7.1%	29.3%	↑0.1%; ↓9.1%
2012 regional election	13.7%	30.7%	↑6.6%; ↑1.4%
2015 regional election	-	-	39.6% (ERC and CDC combined)

In some regards, support for pro-independence parties, if one examines 1999-2015, looks like it has declined. However, if one notes that CDC moved from a policy position of pro-autonomy to pro-independence near the year 2010, then support for independence has actually grown dramatically (Duerr 2015). Both ERC and CiU have fluctuated over time in terms of voter support, but both parties have been very successful.

Table 3 above has a few idiosyncrasies. First, at the European level, both parties run as part of a larger coalition, which slightly skews their voter support—for this reason, European election results have been excluded. Second, the voter support percentages for CiU were calculated until the dissolution of the party prior to the 2015 Catalan regional election. Finally, Junts Pel Sí is the combined score for ERC and CDC in the 2015 Spanish election.

Voter support for ERC has fluctuated from around 7% to upwards of 15%. The recent zenith of the party occurred in 2004, and has in recent years increased close to this level; by contrast, the nadir of voter support for the party occurred in the Spanish elections of 2000 and 2010.

Likewise, voter support for CiU declined dramatically in the 2004 and 2008 Spanish elections, but, otherwise, the party has been dominant in Catalan politics. CiU garnered close to 40 percent in the 1999 and 2010 regional elections. Moreover, in a coalition with ERC, the

coalition was supported by almost 40 percent of the popular vote, and won the 2015 regional election.

Table 4: A comparison of changes in voter support, PC and SNP, 1999-2015

	PC	SNP	SNP over PC
1999 regional election	28.4%	28.7%	+0.3%
2001 British general election	14.3%	20.1%	+6.8%
2003 regional election	21.2%	23.8%	+2.6%
2004 European election	17.1%	19.7%	+2.6%
2005 British general election	12.6%	17.7%	+5.1%
2007 regional election	22.4%	32.9%	+10.5%
2009 European election	18.5%	29.1%	+10.6%
2010 British general election	11.3%	19.9%	+8.6%
2011 regional election	19.3%	45.4%	+31.1%
2014 European election	15.3%	29.0%	+13.7%
2015 British general election	12.1%	50.0%	+37.9%

In more recent years, as support for the SNP has grown, voter support for PC has remained stagnant, and has even declined. PC and SNP were closely matched at the 1999 regional elections, and shortly thereafter, but voter support for the SNP began to rise in the early 2000s as shown in Table 4. Later on in the decade, the SNP was winning well over 10 percent more of the vote than PC; moreover, PC began to decline from approximately 18 percent down to 12 percent.

Finally, the SNP won 50.0 percent at the British general election in 2015 when many voters left the Labour Party to support the SNP in the aftermath of the Scottish independence referendum. Even though some of these voters only support greater autonomy (Mitchell et. al. 2012), voters for the SNP will likely mobilize into a pro-independence agenda on the part of the SNP.

Table 5: Table 4: A comparison of changes in voter support, DéFI and RW versus VB and N-VA, 1999-2015

Election	DéFI	RW	Flemish	Difference
1999 Belgian election	<1%	<1%	15.5% (VB)	+14.5%
2003 Belgian election	With MR	<1%	23.4% (Both)	+22.4%
2004 European election	With MR	<1%	23.2% (VB)	+22.2%
2004 regional	With MR	<1%	24.2% (VB)	+23.3%

election				
2007 Belgian election	With MR	<1%	19.0% (VB)	+18.0%
2009 European election	With MR	<1%	25.2% (Both)	+24.2%
2010 Belgian general election	With MR	<1%	40.8% (Both)	+39.8%
2014 combined election	<1%	<1%	38.1% (Both)	+37.1%

Although specific voter percentages are not shown for DéFI or RW, neither party has garnered over 1 percent of the vote since 1999. As a result, the "difference" column merely shows that the Flemish pro-independence political parties, especially when N-VA transitioned to support independence at around the same time as CDC in 2010 (Duerr 2015). Support for Flemish nationalism has grown to approximately 40 percent whilst Walloon independentism has remained at virtually nil.

Table 6: A comparison of changes in voter support, BNG and CDC/ERC, 1999-2015

	BNG	ERC and CDC	Difference
1999 regional election	N/A (1997)	46.4%	
2000 Spanish election	18.6%	34.4%	+15.8%
2001-2003 regional election	22.4%	47.3%	+24.9%

2004 Spanish election	11.4%	36.7%	+25.3%
2005-2006 regional election	18.8%	45.5%	+26.7%
2008 Spanish election	12.1%	28.7%	+16.6%
2009-2010 regional election	17.0%	45.4%	+28.4%
2011 Spanish election	11.3%	36.4%	+25.1%
2012 regional election	10.0%	44.4%	+34.4%
2015 regional election	To be held in 2016	39.6%	

Although a direct comparison of Galicia and Catalonia is challenging, there are points of comparison that can be made. Support for BNG has fluctuated between 10-20 percent, but never has the party attained the level of CiU and ERC combined. Even though regional elections were held in different years, a comparison of voter support for independence shows that Galician pro-independence support has remained stagnant; whereas, support for Catalan secession has grown, especially with the aforementioned switch by CDC to pro-independence positions.

Conclusions

Given the divergence of cases, the short term outcome of increased secessionist agitation in Scotland, Catalonia, and Flanders, does not seem to result in increased support for pro-independence movements in other parts of the country. Although showing that a direct correlation between levels of support in different parts of the same country encompasses

numerous factors, voter support can be taken as one measure of this outcome because votes can lead to political change.

In terms of increased support, there is no real evidence for a requisite change using these cases. Wales, for example, has not seen a similar increase in support for PC whilst support for the SNP has grown in Scotland. Likewise, DéFI and RW have both struggled to win many votes (less than 1% of the vote) in Walloon politics even though Flemish pro-independence parties have become very successful. Even in Galicia, BNG has not seen as great a level of support as CiU and ERC combined; in fact, voter support for BNG has remained fairly steady, but has not increased as support for Catalan pro-independence parties has increased.

As a result, it is prudent to conclude that the existence, and voter support for, a pro-independence party in one party of the country does not correlate to increased support for secessionist political parties in another part of the country. Although only three cases have been utilized here, secessionist agitation in one region has not led to similar voter shifts elsewhere. The territorial integrity of the UK, Belgium, and Spain, while challenged by a rise in Scottish, Flemish, and Catalan nationalism, has not seen increased support in Wales, Wallonia, and Galicia. However, some voter support remains in Wales for PC, and in Galicia for BNG, but pro-Walloon independence parties are still at around nil.

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